

12 Ways to Live a Life of Purpose in 2012, Part 2



“That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;”
Colossians 1:10

Have you thought anymore about how you want to live a life of purpose in 2012?

In the last blog post, we discussed four ways you could do this in 2012. After having some time to mull these over and maybe try a few of the suggestions, let’s look at the next four items on the list.

5. Choose a non-fiction Christian book to read that challenges you. Before you start reading this book, pray and ask that God will change you in the process. Ask Him to show you what you need to learn from this book, and pray that you would be open to making the changes God wants you to make. Stick with it, even if it’s slow going. Actively read the book. If the book is your own copy, this means you should write in the margins, highlight sections you want to remember, and make notes in the text. The more you interact with the text, the more of it you will take in. Try to repeat this process a few times this year. If you’d like a few book suggestions, you could start

with one of these:

- I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist by Geisler and Turek
- Mere Christianity by C. S. Lewis, or anything else by him
- Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy by Eric Metaxas

6. Schedule a retreat at a retreat center. Do this with a group from your church, some of your friends, or take a night or two or three by yourself at a retreat center and spend some time with God in prayer. I know you spend time in prayer at your own home, too, but there's just something different about getting away to a retreat center that you can't duplicate elsewhere. First of all, when you're away from home, you can't be distracted by all the work you think you should be doing at your house. You'll be able to use the time to completely disengage from the responsibilities of child care, cleaning the house, or doing the laundry—guilt free.

Secondly, retreat centers have resources for you to take advantage of like prayer labyrinths, chapels, libraries and even classes for you to take. Try it. You'll love it. Ask God to show you what He wants you to learn from the weekend. Be sure you write down what you are learning and where you go from here. You can use the following link to help you find a retreat center near you, searching by your state: [Retreat Finder](#). Keep in mind that not all of the sites listed are Christian, so research the listings before you make a reservation. I even found a site close to my house that does not charge a set fee—it's on a donation basis!

7. Begin a new spiritual discipline in your life. Have you ever wanted to explore fasting? Or perhaps you have an interest in journaling, or maybe the discipline of self-examen has piqued your interest. Spend some time learning about a discipline and then begin to incorporate it into your life. **Both Dallas Willard and Richard Foster have classic**

books available on the disciplines, and either book would be a good place for you to start learning.

8. Begin praying through the World Watch List of the 50 most hostile, restrictive countries in the world (to Christianity). Open Doors USA compiles this annual list. Click for the 2014 version.

I'm excited about living a life of purpose in 2012. I wonder how God will change me through this process. Have you tried any of the suggestions yet, or are you planning on doing one soon? If so, we'd love for you to leave a comment and tell us about it. We've got four more suggestions to go, and Mary is going to cover those in the next blog post.

Until then, pray on!

Jane